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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 005203

SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [FR](#)

SUBJECT: GOF PROPOSES NEW DOMESTIC C/T POLICIES AFTER LONDON BOMBINGS

REF: 04 PARIS 3771

[11.](#) (SBU) Summary and comment: In the aftermath of the July 7 and 21 bombings in London and the July 22 bombings in Sharm el-Sheikh, the GOF has proposed a number of new policies to combat terrorism, including the expanded use of closed-circuit television cameras in public areas, renewed efforts to expel radical imams, the inclusion of video as evidence in prosecutions, and additional efforts to fight document fraud. The GOF's recent muscular reaction contrasts with the post-Madrid bombings period, during which GOF leaders assured the public that France was one of the most advanced EU countries in C/T work, and no expanded powers were needed. PM Villepin (who had made C/T his most visible priority as Interior Minister) and Interior Minister Sarkozy have been jousting to appear the most committed and firm in fighting terrorism. Neither have mentioned France's oft-cited need to better integrate its Muslim population, perhaps because of the backdrop of the London bombings, in which the alleged bombers appeared to be well-integrated. Rather, they have focused their proposals and public statements on security. The London bombings have also provoked a torrent of commentary, including a rare front-page editorial by Le Monde editor-in-chief Jean-Marie Colombani calling into question European models of integration. End summary and comment.

EXPANDED SECURITY MEASURES FOCUS ON THE DOMESTIC FRONT

[12.](#) (U) Aside from public statements and the raising of France's Vigipirate warning system to "red" (the second highest level), the GOF had not otherwise reacted to recent terror attacks in the UK and Egypt until July 25, when Interior Minister Sarkozy hosted an expanded C/T meeting that included police, intelligence and public transport officials. The meeting ended with a decision to advance proposals increasing the level of video surveillance in public transport, maintaining for a longer period of time cellular phone call information and redoubling efforts to issue secure identity papers. The next day, July 26, the Interior Security Council (CSI) met. The CSI is a relatively new Cabinet-level body that reports directly to the President, and is used to convey the President's wishes on internal security issues (reftel). For the first time ever, the issues discussed and the conclusions reached were made public. Key points include: drafting a bill by the end of August (to be debated in the fall and passed before Christmas) that will reinforce the use of video surveillance in public transport and allow its full use as evidence in court; mandating that all international trains include ID checks; mandating that cellular phone companies conserve for a longer period time certain details regarding all SMS and phone calls (which implements decisions made in an earlier meeting of G-5 Interior Ministers); and reinforcing France's work to produce a passport with a microchip that includes a person's identity photo. The CSI also decided to place surveillance cameras in all 4000 Paris-area buses and to greatly increase the number of cameras in the Paris metro system.

[13.](#) (SBU) The CSI decided to maintain the elevated Vigipirate status, which includes deploying an extra 1000 French military to guard sensitive sites. In a July 27 article reporting on the CSI meeting, Le Figaro newspaper speculated that disclosure of the contents of the meeting was done for two reasons: 1) the GOF could demonstrate that it was taking very seriously the three recent attacks; and 2) it focused attention on the President and the Prime Minister, and so demonstrated that Interior Minister Sarkozy is not the sole determiner of France's C/T posture. (Comment: Along these lines, it is interesting that the CSI recommendations are very similar to those proposed a day earlier in the meeting chaired by Sarkozy. Although Sarkozy's Monday meeting was reported in the press, the surprise disclosure of details pertaining to the CSI meeting overwhelmed coverage of Sarkozy's meeting. End comment.)

TERRORISM RESONATES AS A SUBJECT OF COMMENTARY

[14.](#) (U) Major French dailies devoted many columns to analyzing the terrorist threat. In a rare front-page editorial July 27, Le Monde editor-in-chief Jean-Marie Colombani wrote a ten-bullet piece on "Living with terrorism." His central

message was that the Islamist terrorism threat was long-term and would primarily impact Europe. He said European models of integration (the British "multicultural" model and the French "integrationist" model) were called into question given the rise of an indigenous terrorism with roots in Europe and the Middle East. Colombani reprised a theme raised recently by French intellectual and researcher Bernard Henri-Levy, that Pakistan is the "epicenter" of world terrorism.

15. (SBU) Gilles Kepel, a noted researcher on Islamic extremism, wrote on July 26 in Le Figaro newspaper that the London bombings demonstrated the failure of the British "multicultural" model, just as the assassination of filmmaker Theo Van Gogh did the same for the similar Dutch "multicultural" model. The key problem with the model, said Kepel, was that the UK and Dutch governments allowed imams and other purveyors of radical discourse to exert social control over Muslim communities. (Comment: Although Kepel did not cite the more interventionist French model as a counter-example, it was clear from the context that he considered the French model to be more successful in identifying the first signs of terrorist planning. With their nation-wide network of police and intelligence agencies, especially the RG (France's police intelligence agency) and the DST (France's internal security service), the GOF model focuses heavily on the surveillance and monitoring of communities it considers at risk. However, this aspect of the French model is rarely discussed or reported in French press. End comment.)

STAPLETON